

print as quickly as possible (p. 9); it would have been better if they had gone more slowly in the interests of accuracy.

The book contains many photographs; some of quite good quality, others almost useless. On page 47 is a photograph which is supposed to be a picture of Big Ben, paranormally produced by Masuaki. Try as I may, I cannot see anything in these blurred blotches which bears the slightest resemblance to the famous clock-tower. The same applies to the photograph on page 49, supposed to be a paranormally produced picture of part of the Uphoffs' house in Wisconsin. No doubt the originals from which these pictures were made are clearer, but that is not much help to the uncommitted reader who wants to be able to make his own judgment of the phenomena on the basis of the evidence presented in the book.

Were Masuaki's feats paranormal? I find myself still unable to decide. There are certainly a few disquieting features about the evidence presented here. For example, when Professor Szybalski submitted a marked spoon for bending, he received a substituted spoon in return. The authors interpret this as a genuine mistake on the part of the Japanese boys, which may—or may not—be the correct explanation. Also, the Uphoffs do not appear to see anything suspicious in the fact that, during a metal-bending session in Madison, Masuaki and Hiroto decided to go to the lavatory *at the same time*, that Masuaki took a spoon with him, and that the two youths remained there for five minutes. After, but not before, this incident, a spoon was found to be twisted. I also found it disconcerting to be suddenly told (on p. 95) that Masuaki had with him a 'young friend' known as Larc L. Nowhere else in the book is this person mentioned, nor are we told whether he was present at any of the other sessions. Details such as these are of great importance when assessing the possibilities of trickery. Knowing who was present at each sitting is surely much more important than knowing that Masuaki likes hamburgers!

Nevertheless the book is worth reading for some of the background information it contains, and particularly for its reproduction of papers by scientific investigators. Thus, there is a paper by Larissa Vilenskaya on PK research in the U.S.S.R. by W. E. Cox on his experiments with the Japanese boys, by Mark Shafer on various kinds of PK experiments which he has performed, and by John Hasted. Pages 203–4 contain an interesting account of a personal PK experience which occurred to Gerri Howard, a member of Mensa's special interest group in psi.

J. L. RANDALL

**THE ELUSIVE SCIENCE: Origins of Experimental Psychical Research.** By Seymour H. Mauskopf and Michael R. McVaugh, with an afterword by J. B. and L. E. Rhine, 1980. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, no price, 368 pp.

Mauskopf and McVaugh are two outstanding modern American historians of science who have devoted years of their lives and a great fund of ingenuity, sensitivity, expertise as well as painstaking and detailed work to parapsychology—'the elusive science'. The result is a book of a major importance which no one in the field can afford to ignore. We all need to understand the setting within which our data arise and the contexts within which they are evaluated; we all

need to see ourselves as others see us; we all need to acquire the greater breadth provided only by historical analysis; we all need a deeper understanding of just why the scientific community has still not fully accepted parapsychology as a respectable discipline; and finally we can all benefit from the example of top level scholarship applied to the activities and events upon which the present scene is based.

The authors use as their starting point and mainstay the voluminous archives at Duke University and they explicitly eschew the 'presentist' point of view of scientific development—that of judging the past by how well it accords with present day theory and practice. They answer the question whether they have come to believe in ESP with a 'qualified yes', in the sense that they accept that not all results are due to fraud or experimental error, but they are not prepared to say whether positive results are due to a genuine human faculty or some sort of random anomaly. They address themselves to the question: why has parapsychology failed to establish itself? and reject both the ultracritical position namely that there is nothing to establish, as well as the view that conservatism and intransigence are responsible for the continued scientific rejection of the subject. Their own detailed analysis begins in the 1920s and finishes in 1940, and they accept that no really definitive explanation is feasible 'without a detailed study of the later period'. Yet they feel obliged to give at least a list of factors that have militated against parapsychology: the subject had to deal with phenomena which do not appear common in mankind to any marked degree; its legitimization would have unsettling consequences for scientific theory; the phenomena are difficult to control and replicate (admirably conservative, that); different standards are invoked for what counts as 'replication' by advocates and critics.

What they describe—among many important things such as the interrelation between individual researchers and groups—is in effect the systematic failure of what might be called parapsychology's American dream: the belief that we are dealing with universal and relatively easily isolable and assessable characteristics of persons. (As a matter of fact much the same applies to a good deal of ordinary psychology; one could easily imagine a general knowledge question in a multiple choice paper in the form: J. B. Watson is to psychology what — is to parapsychology [underline the correct name: Richet, Sidgwick, Rhine, Tyrrell, Dingwall]).

It should not be imagined that the authors confine themselves exclusively to the American scene, they provide interesting and penetrating accounts of events in this country, and much of this will be news to many readers. 'Presentists'—the chauvinists of the currently fashionable—would do well to see how much careful work and thought, hope and disappointment, were expended and experienced in the earlier decades of this century by dedicated members of the SPR. It is sobering, too, how similar quarrels and in-fights recur, both here and in America. There can be little doubt of the truth of what has become a near cliché: those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it.

The book contains an infuriatingly elusive contribution to the enigma of Dr. S. G. Soal, by describing an episode in 1938, when the SPR Council, of which he was a member, agreed to sponsor BBC tests of ESP. Carington, Herbert (now Lord Powys) and Soal were appointed to see to the detailed arrangements. Soal

shortly afterwards wrote secretly to Harry Price about the plan, urging him to get in first and to arrange with the BBC to do such an experiment with the ULCPI [Price's organization] to be carried out under Soal's own supervision without interference from Carington. When in June the Council learned that they had been forestalled, they were outraged. Soal adopted a bold front by claiming (falsely) "that the ULCPI had considered approaching the BBC before the SPR Committee were appointed". . . ' (p. 235). This partly clandestine Soal-Price axis is certainly interesting, but I would have welcomed a bit more than the tantalising hints throw out.

One hesitates to raise any criticism, apart from relative minutiae, e.g. the statement that Harry Price founded, as opposed to revived, the Ghost Club: every writer, especially every historian, has to leave out something if the task is to be at all manageable. The problem is that leaving out *some* things can lead to a partial distortion of the overall perspective, and one cannot always tell in advance just which economies will be innocuous, and which are likely to impair the solidity of the edifice or important constituent parts. It is thoroughly understandable that Mauskopf and McVaugh should decide to leave on one side the major physical phenomena: yet in my view this omission affects one's overall judgment of the European, British and American scene in the 1930s. An impression is conveyed that these phenomena can safely be disregarded, and the authors do not juxtapose the acceptance of physical phenomena by such disparate champions as Richet, an almost simple materialist, and Conan Doyle, an explicit spiritualist crusader, although they show awareness of both. The suggestion that by 1933 the debate over mental vs. physical phenomena had been settled by default, by the disappearance of all convincing physical mediums (p. 103) is distinctly odd in view of the most important British and French investigations of Rudi Schneider, the Hope-Rayleigh report, the Myers Memorial lecture by Osty, and Lord Rayleigh's presidential address. The tacit assumption that ectoplasmic and other gross physical manifestations can be safely ignored leads, in my view, to an oversimplification not only of their analysis of the American debate over Margery's mediumship, but also of the higher level question of the legitimation of the subject of parapsychology.

The book, beautifully written, is largely based on primary sources, and the scholarly notes and references are very much worth scrutinising. It is to be hoped that the authors will continue the work, and present us with the sequel.

ANITA GREGORY

INTO THE BLUE: Great Mysteries of Aviation. By Alexander McKee. Souvenir Press, London, 1981. 296 pp. £8.95

Mr. McKee's well written and researched account of aviation mysteries contains a number of examples of ghostly happening, including one of his own in a Scottish castle when he 'saw' the apparition of a girl in a flowing red dress. 'The figure was only partly in the room; it was also partly in my mind', he said. The girl's emotions were sensed strongly by him. He afterwards found that there was a historically exact basis for what he had 'seen' and 'understood' and added that 'That incident convinced me that one could indeed sense the past, and I thought that perhaps if an emotion, hate or love, was strong enough, it might go on forever in the place where it had been first experienced.' Professor H. H. Price